THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS :

1. Apparatus for the composting of material which includes a container which has an openable lid which closes with respect to its surrounding perimeter by means of a resilient seal so as to provide a substantially airtight closure with the container, across the bottom of the container being a series of conduits which have a plurality of holes passing through the walls thereof which are collectively fed to a single exiting conduit which feeds into a pump and through a filter back into a supply conduit, wherein the aqueous liquids formed during treatment are held at a level lower than that of the supply conduits, by a combination of a sump below the supply conduits and floor means to hold the material being treated above the sump.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, further characterized in that the floor means has a plurality of apertures disposed thereon.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 or 2, in that the floor means is sloping.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the plurality of apertures disposed on floor means are located at a lowermost point to allow liquid to pass through and into the sump.

5. The apparatus of anyone of the preceding claims further characterized in that there is a pump means to pump the liquid from the lowermost area to disperse over the top of the material to be composted

6. The apparatus of any one of claims 1-5 further characterized in that there are means with which to access the liquid in the sump from outside the container.

7. The apparatus as in any one of the preceding claims further characterized in that there are number of chambers in connection with the lowermost for isolation of the liquid material produced.

8. A method of treating materials to be composted which includes the steps of containing such materials within the closed container as described in any of the apparatus claims then effecting a first covering of woodchips then successively a layer of organic material to be composted and a layer of absorbing woodchips, pumping air into the container at one part of the contained body of material, and taking the air having passed through the material from the container so that it, and it only, will be substantially recirculated back to an introduction location of the material so that gaseous products of any decomposition of the materials will be kept within the container or its connected conduits, the liquid formed as a result of the composting passing through the floor means and held at a level lower than that of the supply conduits.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the collected liquid is extracted from the lower most level and reintroduced in to the top of the container.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the extraction of liquid and reintroduction to the top of the container is effected from time to time through the period of composting.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the liquid is collected and held for a period of time to encourage bacteria growth.

12. A method of treating materials to be composted as in any one of claims 8-11 further characterised in that there are conduits attached to the container which are also coupled to an air pump so that the air pump will cause the air to be extracted through one conduit and to be introduced back into the container through the other conduit.

13. A method of treating materials to be composted as in any one of claims 8-12 further characterised in that the recirculation is effected from time to time through the period of composting.

14. A method of treating materials to be composted as in any one of claims 8-13 further characterised in that the recirculation of the air and gases is through a biofilter in the pathway of such recirculating gases.

15. A method of treating materials to be composted as in the immediately preceding claim further characterised in that the biofilter includes compost or similar organic material through which the air to be filtered is passed.

16. A method of composting as in any one of claims 8-15 wherein the layer of organic material to be composted is a layer of bodies.

17. A method of composting materials as in any one of claims 8-16, which are high in protein content including the steps of holding the composting materials in a closed container and recycling through the material substantially only the air and any resultant gases given off from the composting materials.

18. A method as in the immediately preceding claim further characterised in that there are means to effect a cyclic operation of a pump so that it can be switched on and switched off over a decomposing period according to a pre-arranged program.

19. A method of composting which includes the steps of placing the materials to be composted into a container, sealing the container and then blowing in a recycling manner substantially only the air and gases contained within the container through the composting materials for a period of time to collect and distribute ammonia sufficient to allow for a substantial buildup in concentration to a pathogen killing level of ammonia derived from the composting materials, maintaining such circulation for a sufficient period of time

so as to effect a substantial pathogen kill in the composting material, and then collecting the liquid produced during the composting from a chamber positioned below the level of the material.

20. A method as in one of the preceding method claims further characterised in that the composting materials are placed in layers with materials separating the respective layers, which are porous.

21. The apparatus as substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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By their Patent Attorneys
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